



Pacific Northwest Region  
Wallowa-Whitman National Forest  
1550 Dewey Ave.  
Baker City, OR 97814  
[www.fs.usda.gov/wallowa-whitman](http://www.fs.usda.gov/wallowa-whitman)

# News Release

Contact: Jodi Kramer (541) 523-1246; Darcy Weseman (541) 523-1302

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## Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Existing Condition Road Maps Ready for Review

**Baker City, Oregon** – Beginning August 18<sup>th</sup> through November 28, 2014, the public, Counties, and Tribes will have an opportunity to provide additional information on the existing condition road and motorized trail maps. Wallowa-Whitman Forest Supervisor John Laurence indicated that one of the public concerns raised about travel management when he arrived on the Forest was that the Wallowa-Whitman needed to get a better handle on the condition of the Forest Service roads and motorized trails, and how they were being used. “I want the public and tribes to know that I heard them loud and clear,” said Laurence. “With that in mind, I asked my staff members to create a map that depicts existing condition and motorized vehicle use of the Forest Service system road and motorized trail network within the travel management planning area,” added Laurence.

“The question I am asking the public to help us with is **“Do these maps accurately reflect how the Forest Service system roads and motorized trails that you are familiar with, are being used?”** said Laurence. **If they don’t, please share your knowledge with us about the roads you enjoy and use, and let us know how you use them throughout the year,**” added Laurence. Laurence also emphasizes that this effort is **not about whether a road should be open or closed**, nor is it a formal public comment period, rather it is about whether the maps correctly display how National Forest system roads and motorized trails are being used.

This information, when complete, will help the Forest update the maps over the winter and complete an updated existing condition map by next spring. After next spring, the updated existing condition map, in combination with the analysis for the sustainable road system (Subpart A of the Travel



for the greatest good

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Management Rule), will serve as the starting point to begin discussions and the official public planning process to be in compliance with the 2005 Travel Management Rule. This Rule does require every National Forest to produce a Motorized Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) that designates roads, trails, and areas for public motorized vehicle use.

The maps are at a larger scale in response to public concerns over the readability of previous travel management maps. These maps make it easier to determine where you are on-the-ground and they are labeled with the full 7-digit road number on each road. The base layer for these maps was taken from the Forest Service road inventory that is stored in the Forest Service database of record. The maps were then updated using the survey information provided by the public, primarily local citizens, as well as the Baker, Union, and Wallowa County survey efforts conducted from 2007-2012. These maps were further updated with information added by Forest Service employees based on their personal knowledge of the condition and use of forest roads specific to activities completed and areas where they have worked.

The maps are simplified and display roads that are open and being used by some type of motorized vehicle during some part of the year (in Green on the maps); roads that are closed and not being used by motorized vehicles (in Red on the maps); roads that have been closed but are still being used by motorized vehicles (in Yellow on the maps); and roads which have been closed at some point in time but neither the public nor the employees have reported any motorized vehicle use information for these roads (in Gray on the maps).

Due to the high cost of producing these maps (approximately \$125/set), the Forest cannot afford to provide printed maps to hand out to the public. However, map sets, comment forms, and printing instructions are available for download from the web at:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/ExistingConditionRoadMaps>. The public may request a CD with all the maps on it with printing instructions by calling 541-523-1246 or 541-523-1302. A set of printed maps are being provided to the Baker, Union, Wallowa, and Grant County Commissioners; and the Nez Perce Tribe and Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla. In addition, map sets are available for viewing at the Wallowa-Whitman Ranger District Offices in Joseph, La Grande, Baker City, and Halfway.

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Information can be submitted by dropping the forms in collection boxes located at each District office; mailing them to: WWNF Road Use Map Information, 3502 Highway 30, La Grande, Oregon 97850; or by emailing them to: [wwnf\\_travel\\_mgmt\\_plan@fs.fed.us](mailto:wwnf_travel_mgmt_plan@fs.fed.us).

For additional information or questions, you may call 541-523-1246, 541-962-850, or 541-523-1302.

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